



The Courier-Journal

Newspaper archive powered by **NewsBank**

Subscribe
 Click here to get the latest news delivered to your door.

Archive Search > Buy > Print

[» New Search](#) [» Pricing](#) [» Help](#) [» FAQ](#)

[Return to results](#) [Printer Friendly](#)

July 20, 2007

Section: News

Edition: METRO

Page: 1B

Family milks dairy business for all it's worth

BYRON CRAWFORD

As twilight settled across rural Warren County last Friday, people with lawn chairs gathered in a barnyard at Chaney's dairy farm west of Bowling Green for "Ice Cream and a Moovie."

Chaney's Dairy Barn is not just for Jersey cows anymore. Its "moo" has gone to the movies that now are shown on the south end of the barn after dark — while ice cream and sandwiches are being served from the shop inside.

"If this 'Ice-Cream-and-a-Moovie' thing continues to take off, I'm going to have to worry about where to put people," said Carl Chaney. "We figure we had over 300 for 'The Wizard of Oz' last week."

"Agritourism" is growing from an obscure footnote of the farm economy into a cash crop at Chaney's and a number of other farms across Kentucky and Southern Indiana.

Chaney's ancestors settled on the farm in 1888, and his father, Jim, now 84, began milking Jersey cows on the place in 1940. Carl and his wife, Debra, with their three children, Jessica, James and Elizabeth, took over operation of the dairy about 15 years ago.

"Now we're getting good milk prices, but a year ago we were selling our milk for the same price we were getting in 1978," said Carl Chaney. "As our daughter, Elizabeth, said in a 4-H speech: We either had to get bigger; get out or do something different."

After researching agritourism in several states, the Chaney's decided to supplement their dairy operation with an ice cream parlor and sandwich shop in a new barn near the highway, and to open the farm to tours.



Family-oriented movies, which are shown every other Friday night through August, are free, but customers line up to buy Debra's sandwiches and potato soup — and for nearly 30 flavors of ice cream and a variety of sundaes, shakes and giant specialty desserts.

Chaney's Dairy Barn uses peaches from local orchards and Kentucky-grown pecans and strawberries for its ice cream, as well as Kentucky meats, cheeses and other "Kentucky Proud" products in sandwiches served on homemade bread.

A second Chaney's Dairy Barn store has opened in Bowling Green. The family has developed a "Big Red Rumble" cake and ice cream dish especially for Western Kentucky University. Although the ice cream is currently made with a special dairy mix from Flavo-Rich, the family hopes to eventually process milk from its own dairy for use in its ice cream.

"It's an example of how farmers throughout the state are looking for new ways and new markets to enable them to stay on the land by doing things in a completely untraditional manner," said Bill Clary, a spokesman for the Kentucky Department of **Agriculture**.

More than 7,000 schoolchildren will visit the Chaney farm this year to see how milk and ice cream are produced, and how dairy farm families make a living.

"A lot of them don't realize that bread and pizza crust comes from wheat, or that ice cream comes from milk ... and when I put the milkers on the cow and they see milk come through that hose, it's like my reaction when I saw the Grand Canyon," said Chaney.

Chaney's Dairy Barn is open seven days a week and is on U.S. 31W, six miles south of Lost River Cave at Bowling Green.

For more information, go to www.chaneysdairybarn.com or phone (270) 843-5567.

Byron Crawford's column appears on Sundays, Wednesdays and Fridays. Reach him at (502) 582-4791 or bcrawford@courier-journal.com. Comment on this column, and read previous columns, at www.courier-journal.com/byron.

Byron Crawford

Copyright (c) The Courier-Journal. All rights reserved. Reproduced with the permission of Gannett Co., Inc. by NewsBank, inc.

^^ [Back to top](#)

[Home](#) · [News](#) · [Sports](#) · [Business](#) · [Features](#) · [Louisville Scene](#) · [Classifieds](#) · [Jobs](#) · [Cars](#) · [Homes](#) · [Marketplace](#) · [Contact Us](#)



Copyright 2004 The Courier-Journal.

Use of this site signifies your agreement to the [Terms of Service](#) (updated 12/18/2003).

Send questions and comments to [The Webmaster](#).